

Message Text

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ACTION AID-20

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FM AMEMBASSY DAKAR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6090

INFO AMEMBASSY BANJUL

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AFDROUGHT

EO 11652: NA

SUBJ: MISSION RECOMMENDATION ON REQUESTED AID FOR GAMBIA.

1. REFERENCE GAMBIAN REQUEST JAN 15 FOR NINE THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED MT COMMODITY ASSISTANCE, FFPO VISIT TO BANJUL HAS ESTABLISHED NEED FOR ASSISTANCE, THOUGH NOT OF STATED MAGNITUDE. PRECISE ESTIMATE OF ACTUAL GRAIN SHORTFALL NOT READILY AVAILABLE FROM EITHER HOST GOVT OR UNDP SOURCES, BUT UNEVEN RAIN DISTRIBUTION HAS UNDOUBTEDLY AFFECTED CROP PRODUCTION, PARTICULARLY RICE CULTIVATION IN UPLAND AREAS, WHICH ARE LARGELY UNIRRIGATED. FURTHER CROP DAMAGE CAUSED BY INSECT DEPRADATITS DURING FIRST FEW WEEKS OF RAINY SEASON.

2. WORST-AFFECTED AREAS APPEAR TO BE (A) WESTERN DIV., WITH POPULATION OF 97,000 (B) NORTHERN DISTRICTS OF MCCARTHY ISLAND DIV. (47,000 AFFECTED OF A TOTAL POPULATION OF APPROXIMATELY 100,000); AND (C) UPPER RIVER DIV., WITH 80,000-87,000 POPULATION. IN THOSE AREAS, MINAGRIC ESTIMATES A CROP SHORTFALL OF FROM THIRTY TO FORTY PERCENT.

3. GROUND-NUT HARVEST PRESENTS NO DIFFICULTIES IN TERMS OF POSSIBLE CONFLICT CONCERNING MOVEMENT THIS COMMODITY AND GRAIN BY LIGHTER, WHICH VESSELS NORMALLY LEAVE BANJUL EMPTY ON THE VOYAGE UPSTREAM, ACCORDING SECRETARY MIN. LOCAL GOVT, RETURNING WITH GROUNDNUT. BANJUL PORT, SAME SOURCE AVERS, HAS BAGGED

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COMMODITY RECEIPT CAPABILITY OF THREE THOUSAND SIX HUNDRED MT/

WEEKLY. PORT AUTHORITY LIGHTERAGE CAPABILITY ONLY FOUR HUNDRED FIFTY MT., BUT GAMBIA RIVER TRANSPORT CO'S LIGHTER FLEET HAS GROSS CARRYING CAPACITY OF APPROX 10N000 MT. EIGHT LIGHTERS TOWED UPSTREAM BY SINGLE TUGBOAT ACCOUNT FOR TWELVE HUNDRED MT.: FURTHEST POINT UPSTREAM TO WHICH GRAIN CAN BE TOWED EN ROUTE ULTIMATE DESTINATION IS FATOTO, 250 MILES FROM BANJUL, OR JOURNEY AVERAGING 40 HOURS. FROM POINT OF DISCHARGE, TRANSPORT TO HINTERLANDS ACCOMPLISHED BY (CONTRACT) TRUCK AND OX-CART.

4. SIZEABLE FOOD STORES APPARENTLY EXIST IN ALL FIVE DIVS OF GAMBIA AS FOLLOWS:

- (A) NORTHERN DIVISION (KEREWAN) 250 MT
- (B) MCCARTHLISLAND DIVISION (KAUR) 250 MT
- (C) LOWER RIVER DIVISION (SAMKWIA) 250 MT
- (D) M.I.D. (BEMAN) 250 MT
- (E) UPPER RIVER DIVISION 500 MT
- (F) WESTERN DIVISION (YUNDUM) 1,000 MT

TOTAL GRAIN STORAGE IS THEREFORE AN ESTIMATED 2,500 MT. ADDITIONALLY, DURING SIX MONTHS OF THE YEAR (JUNE-NOV) COMMODITIES CAN BE DISPERSED FOR STORAGE IN SEED BANKS, OF WHICH EACH VILLAGE POSSESSES ONE, ACCORDING SAME SOURCE.

5. GAMBIAN PRESIDENT JAWARA'S REQUEST FOR COMMODITY ASSISTANCE FOUNDED ON BROAD-BASED FOOD FOR WORK PROGRAM WITH TRIPLE GOAL OF FAMINE RELIEF/SOIL CONSERVATION & RECLAMATION/AGRARIAN-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT. PROGRAM ENVISEAGES EMPLOYMENT OF WORK FORCE OF 50,000 LABORERS, AND ACCOUNTS FOR A TOTAL OF 3,500,000 WORK-DAYS. ESTIMATE IS BASED ON A RATION LEVEL WHICH ASSUMES THAT EACH WORKER SUPPORTS A FAMILY OF FIVE PERSONS (TO INCLUDE HIMSELF): FIVE LBS/DAY/WORKER.

6. FFPO HAS DISCUSSED REQUEST WITH UNDP REP, BANJUL, TOO

IT WAS MADE AND WITH WFP OFFICER ASSIGNED GAMBIA. SINCE WFP CONTRIBUTION OF TWO THOUSAND MT FOOD-GRAINS TO GAMBIA APPEARS LIKELY, MISSION RECOMMENDS THAT THIS BE INCREASED TO 2,500 MT, WITH A MATCHING CONTRIBUTION BY AID FOR A TOTAL ALLOCATION NOT TO EXCEED FIVE THOUSAND MT. SORGHUM, TO BE MADE AVAILABLE GAMBIA FOR SUPPORT OF A MORE MODEST FFW-UNCLASSIFIED

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ASSISTED EFFORT WITHIN THE CONTEXT OF FAMINE RELIEF/SOIL CONSERVATION/AGRARIAN DEVELOPMENT. THIS POSITION CONCURRED IN BY WFP AND UNDP BANJUL.
AGGREY

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